

## 45. The Things We Share: Affordances and obligations

### 16265 - Reciprocity and Sharing Practices among the Nomadic Hunter-Gatherer Rautes of Nepal

Presentation type: Oral presentation

**Author(s):** *Shahu, Man Bahadur (Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, Nepal)*

This ethnography focuses on reciprocity of nomadic hunter-gatherer Raute; whose subsistence relies on foraging wild fruits and roots, hunting monkeys and rhesus, and manufacturing woodenware. I have examined the reciprocity and sharing practices maintained by the Raute's relations with sedentary people such as farmers, artisans and pastoralists. This study highlights how mutual trust, agreements, and generosity contribute to reciprocity and how sharing practices are based on mobility, kinship ties, rituals and occasions. The notion of reciprocity and sharing related to "giving", "receiving" and "returning" practices are embedded in social contracts with kin groups, community members, residential proximity and strangers. The reciprocity and sharing practices might be "accepted", "denied" and "cancelled" in Raute society. Despite their disinterest in long-term storage, cash income, agricultural production and animal rearing, their society is affluent due to their continuous exchange and sharing practices. Social network is possible through the miteri- "fictive kinship" with non-Raute that is able to maintain the long-term relationship. The reciprocity and sharing practices based on "altruism" "sharing", "gift-giving" and "gift-returning" have broader social interaction. There might be "obligatory" or "compulsory" and "free" or "voluntary", which are underpinned by consumptions, circulations and distributions of commodities. They overcome the problems like "food scarcity", "starvation" and "malnutrition" through the strategies of "begging", "exchange", "bartering", "negotiating", "over handed", "sharing" and "trade pattern". Their trade relation is concerned with "agreement" and "negotiation" that keep their economy intact. The Raute's economy is systematically organized in terms of "labour mobilizations", "interdependence", "systematic exchange", "co-operation" and "collectivism". I concluded that reciprocity practice in Raute society is embedded in "self-interest", "self-defence", "snatch" and "cheating".

Keywords: Reciprocity, sharing, gift exchange, trade, foraging, hunting-gathering, commodities, miteri and altruism.

## **16075 - "The dark side of sharing" - egalitarianism, hunger and violence among the Ik of northern Uganda:**

Presentation type: Oral presentation

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Although the Ik engage in a combination of hunting and gathering (immediate return) and subsistence agriculture and barter (delayed return), the extreme insecurity of their living situation (ethnic violence and hunger) means that virtually all aspects of their economic life is subjugated to an immediate return dynamic. Everything from the sharing of food to barter with the neighboring Turkana is in principle a one-off transaction, with a mutual turning-of-backs when the transaction has ended. This lack of any kind of long-term binding commitments and dependency to one another over time does not just create equality, but also limits a person's obligations to others, even to close kin. While the dominating principle of sharing disengages the Ik from property rights, from the potentiality of dominating each other, it also destabilizes any attempt at keeping the society together when hunger sets in. This raises the question of how we are to conceptualize "sharing" — as a unitary or fragmentary social force? The Ik themselves are quite aware of this paradoxical dynamic of egalitarianism and extreme individualism and they verbalize it by adopting a particular kind of humor in times of crises. This might point to an inherent aspect of sharing economies more generally, namely that they, above all, are characterized by a particular humorous attitude towards life.

## **16167 - The desire for things; Indigenous artists as consumers in central Australia**

Presentation type: Oral presentation

**Author(s):** *Young, Diana (The University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia / Australien)*

Among Indigenous people in central Australia paintings, and other kinds of creativity marketed as 'art', are generated in a variety of conditions. Making such work is one of the few ways of earning money. Among the artists there are various different kinds of expectations about what they will get in return for selling, what they plans to do with the proceeds and who will buy their work.

This paper stems from research concerning the mesh of exchange, sharing and the consumption desires of artists and their art works. What is being shared in the artworks? What do those artworks want? How are the expectations about the return generated by the artwork's sale met or thwarted? The paper concerns these interlinked transactions, pivoting around the affective affordances of the artworks themselves, and how these qualities are implicated in the desire for goods as material and visual things.

Here I discuss the ways Aboriginal people generate new cultural capital through trade networks with wider Australia and how in turn these impact on creating new kinds of contemporary Indigenous identities through consumption practices, practices that impose considerable emotional pressure on kinship sharing.

## **16107 - Rights and Obligations in a Hunter-Gatherer Economy amongst Warlpiri in central Australia**

Presentation type: Oral presentation

**Author(s):** Stotz, Gertrude (*Independent scholar, Alice Springs, Australia / Australien*)

Hunter-gatherers in Australia base their economy on the relationship between kin and Country. The promise of a future return is based on the right to ask and the obligation to give. Country is communally owned and it disregards all borders; it is a constant value, both spiritual and economic, for the Indigenous Australians of the Central Desert Region. The long-term intent to keep relationships alive is in the core value of everything asked for, and in everything given. Besides food and shelter, many things asked for and given are commercially available; money, grog, cigarettes, blankets, access to a car.

The Warlpiri hunter-gatherer economy exists as a quasi trade relationship between kin who live in town and kin who live on Country. Initiations are regularly conducted, funeral-camps attended, bush foods which are considered medicinal, are brought to town; wild tobacco is most valued. There is no explicit asking and giving but bringing and taking. Among kin this amounts to 'sharing' in return for an automatic acceptance to be received in a home, given food and shelter. 'Sharing' as a term only exists as a cultural concept among Aborigines to differentiate themselves from Non-Aborigines. Asking and giving are the kinship rule that keeps the promise to assure appropriate social engagement with each other and the Country

In this paper I show how disruptions to hunter-gatherer principles of 'sharing' are evident. I point to the effect of Government Institutional policy, which deals only with individuals, as being deleterious on individual lives and on wider family structure.

## **15964 - Sharing in communities of practice**

Presentation type: Oral presentation

**Author(s):** *Widlok, Thomas (University of Cologne, Köln, Germany / Deutschland)*

It has taken anthropological theory considerable time and effort to emancipate a notion of sharing that is not derived from “exchange”, “reciprocity” or “distribution”. Despite these conceptual clarifications the English term “sharing” still covers a very wide variety of phenomena including the transfer of food and consumer items, material objects, ideas and knowledge, and “sharing” is also applied to co-participation in rituals and other events, space and time, skills and so forth. In this paper I suggest that it is fruitful to apply the notion of “community of practice”, understood as a set of relations among persons, activities and things, in order to make useful distinctions and comparisons. Instead of focusing exclusively on the mode of transfer, the “community of practice” approach allows us to also include the nature of the objects and agents involved in the process of sharing. The paper builds on ethnographic field research in Aboriginal Australia and Khoisan southern Africa but also ties in examples from elsewhere for comparative purposes.

## **15963 - Is sharing over? A case study on resettled San in Namibia's Omaheke-Region**

Presentation type: Oral presentation

**Author(s):** Kempen, Jonathan (University of Cologne, Cologne, Germany / Deutschland)

That hunting and gathering societies are widely associated with extensive sharing practices is a well-known fact. However, due to social, spatial and political changes throughout the past decades it must be reassessed to what extent sharing can be seen as a social norm in those societies that do no longer hunt and/or gather as primary means of subsistence. The easiest way to do so is probably through small-scale case studies of such societies that have recently changed socially, spatially and politically.

This paper presents fresh field work data from the Namibian Resettlement Farms of Skoonheid and Drimiopsis that was gathered from September to December 2014 in the context of an MA-Thesis at the University of Cologne. It was found that the local San population's way of defining proper ways of sharing and the way they are practised do not differ significantly from their Non-San (i.e. mostly Damara) village neighbours. The gathered data shows that language, relative wealth, age and place of living play an equally important role when it comes to differences in the definition of sharing norms and the way they are practised. As a matter of fact, among the usual methods from the ethnographer's toolkit was also an experiment derived from Richard B. Lee's 1969 article "Eating Christmas in the Kalahari", which showed in this case that the sharing of meat across language barriers seems to be an even more unreasonable task to the San of Skoonheid than to the local Damaras. These findings may form the basis for a discussion in which the San's status as ideal sharers in comparison to other surrounding societies is reassessed.